

Name: _____ Date: _____ Period: _____

Dalip Singh Saund, Farmer and Politician



That decision to follow the dictates of my own heart was one of the best decisions I've ever made

Did you know that until 1946, immigrants from India were not allowed to own land? They also could not be naturalized. Naturalization is the process that an immigrant must go through to become a U.S. citizen. But thanks to Dalip Singh Saund's hard work, the Luce-Celler Act of 1946 was passed. This act allowed Indian immigrants to own land and become U.S. Citizens.

Dalip Singh Saund was born in India in 1899. He attended college at the University of Punjab and majored in mathematics. After graduating in 1919, he decided to move to the United States for more education.

Dalip went to the University of California to study both agriculture, or farming and mathematics. In 1924 he graduated with both a MA and PhD in math. He decided to stay in the United States instead of returning to India.

Dalip went into business selling lettuce. Unfortunately, this business failed. Dalip worked for many years to pay off his debt to the bank. Then in 1953 he started a fertilizer business.

Dalip Singh Saund began getting involved in politics in the 1940s. The United States had

many rules that made life hard for immigrants from India. Indian immigrants were not allowed to own land or become U.S. Citizens. Saund worked hard to get the Luce-Celler Act of 1946 passed. This act allowed for land ownership and naturalization.

Saund continued to be involved in politics. In 1952 he won a judgeship in California. Then he decided what he wanted to work in Washington D.C. and represent the farmers of California. He was elected as an U.S. Representative for the state of California in 1957. As a congressman, he worked hard to help farmers and minorities. He was a huge supporter of the 1957 Civil Rights Bill.

Saund served in the House of Representatives until 1963. He lost his last election because he was not able to campaign due to his health. In 1962 he suffered a major stroke and was in the hospital for a long time.

Dalip Singh Saund died in 1973. Today he is remembered for being the first Asian American to serve as a U.S. Congressman. Throughout his life he worked hard to overcome racism and prejudice, and to make the United States more fair for immigrants from India.

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1. Give an example from the text that shows racism towards Indian immigrants.

2. What detail from the passage supports that fact that Saund was a hard worker and did not give up easily?

3. Without changing the meaning of the sentence, what word or words could be used to replace “debt” in the following sentence?

Dalip worked for many years to pay off his debt to the bank.

4. Which of Saund’s accomplishments made the most impact on society? Explain your thinking.

